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# Certification Maintenance Manual 2020

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# Maintaining Certification

## Certification Maintenance Overview

Maintaining certification is an important and vital part of becoming a CLSO/CMLSO. As the industry and technology changes, so must the knowledge of a CLSO/CMLSO. Certification and certification maintenance will identify and distinguish laser safety officers among those involved in laser safety practices. Maintaining certification is an important and vital part of becoming a CLSO/CMLSO, as it demonstrates these individuals serving in the field of laser safety have agreed to adhere to high standards of safety and professional practice. Certification and certification maintenance will identify and distinguish laser safety officers among those involved in laser safety practices. The following are general details of certification maintenance:

- Ten (10) CM Points must be obtained over the course of each 3-year cycle.
- The CM cycle starts on January 1st of the year following the year in which the individual passed the examination and ends on December 31st of the 3rd year.
- An updated list of courses and activities eligible for CM Points will be maintained by the BLS. You can obtain a listing by contacting the BLS or visiting [www.lasersafety.org](http://www.lasersafety.org).

## Cycle Length

The CLSO/CMLSO designation is valid for a 3-year cycle. At the end of this cycle, an individual must submit evidence of certification maintenance activities in accordance with the CLSO/CMLSO Policies and Procedures in order to continue using the designation for another 3-year cycle. The CM cycle starts on January 1st of the year following the year in which an individual passed the certification exam. It ends on December 31st of the third year.

In order to maintain certification upon the end of a cycle, an individual must have accrued at least 10 BLS CM points during their CM cycle. Note that activities must be related to laser safety or laser applications to be considered for CM credit. To apply for CM points for activities that are not pre-approved by BLS, please contact our office.

## Renewal Deadlines

It is the responsibility of the CLSO/CMLSO to submit CM forms<sup>1</sup> and recertification fees on time. Notices will be sent out only as a reminder to recertify. CM forms and recertification documentation can be submitted for renewal at any time during the certification cycle, however all CM forms must be postmarked/emailed by December 31<sup>st</sup> of the expiration year. Failure to recertify by the end of the grace period<sup>2</sup> will result in *Inactive Status*. After that time, it will be necessary to retake the exam to

1. "Forms" in this context refers to CM worksheet, Conference Verification Form, Journal Article Verification Worksheet and CM Point Request Form, as applicable.
2. This time period is from January 1<sup>st</sup> to January 31<sup>st</sup> following the third year. It allows ample time for CLSO/CMLSOs to submit any last-minute supplementary documentation or fee payments.

become active again, which includes reapplying, resubmission of reference letters, and payment of the \$50.00 application fee, in addition to payment of the exam fee. Any points earned after December 31st of the 3rd year will not be accepted unless granted an extension year.

## Documentation Policy

CM forms should include all supporting documentation. The BLS may or may not ask for additional supporting documentation when reviewing a CM form. Once a CM form has been reviewed and accepted by the BLS, a letter stating certification has been maintained will be sent to the CLSO/CMLSO. If there are any questions regarding the submitted forms/documentation, the BLS will contact the CLSO/CMLSO for additional documentation or clarification. The CLSO/CMLSO then has sixty (60) days to resolve the situation with the BLS (not applicable if approved for an extension year.) If the situation is not resolved, the CLSO will go to [\*Inactive Status\*](#).

## Certification Maintenance Points (CM Points) Breakdown

- For continuing education, teaching and conference categories, the CM point breakdown is as follows:
  - < 2 hours =  $\frac{1}{4}$  CM point
  - 2 hours to 4 hours =  $\frac{1}{2}$  CM point
  - 4 hours to 6 hours =  $\frac{3}{4}$  CM point
  - > 6 hours = 1 CM point

## CM Point Categories

All CM forms must include supporting documentation to validate the CM points that are being claimed. All required supporting documentation must be provided prior to the CLSO/CMLSO's certification expiration date. If necessary, The BLS will contact the CLSO/CMLSO for additional documentation or clarification. The CLSO/CMLSO then has sixty (60) days to resolve the situation with the BLS (not applicable if approved for an extension year.) If the situation is not resolved, the CLSO will go to [Inactive Status](#). Please note, each category has a maximum number of points that can be claimed.

Category	Category Maximum	Required Documents
<b>Laser Safety Experience</b> i.e., your job. One CM point per year for professional practice of laser safety to be certified in writing by CLSO/CMLSO's supervisor. Refer to <a href="#">Job and Task Descriptions</a> in the BLS Policies and Procedures Manual for more detailed information regarding what constitutes as Laser Safety Experience.	3.0 CM points total, <sup>3</sup> 1.0 CM point given per year	I. Letter from supervisor confirming dates of employment and LSO responsibilities
<b>Laser Safety Education and Training</b> Attendance <sup>4</sup> and successful completion of laser safety specific education and training. See <a href="#">Certification Maintenance (CM) Point Breakdown</a> .	7.0 CM points total	Non Pre-Approved Course I. Course agenda including date of course, topics covered, and duration of course <i>and</i> one of the following: A. Certificate of Completion <i>or</i> B. Course Registration Pre-Approved Course I. Certificate of Completion

3. For each category, maximum number of points total means per the 3-year cycle.

4. Attendance means online, electronic or in person.

Category	Category Maximum	Required Documents
<b>Publication of Papers (Articles)</b>		
<p>Writing of laser safety or laser application related articles published external of your organization in the form of peer-reviewed journals, proceedings, periodicals, books and book chapters, 1.0 CM point per article. Published magazine or newsletter submissions (print or online) will be accepted at .5 CM point per article.</p>	<p>3.0 CM points total</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I. Copy of publication <i>or</i></li> <li>II. Excerpt of published proceeding</li> <li>III. <i>or</i> Letter from BLS crediting for BLS LIA TODAY article</li> </ul>
<b>Membership in Organizations</b>		
<p>Membership in a laser safety-related professional/technical organization or society, e.g., LIA, AIHA or HPS (a complete list of approved organizations can be found on our website).</p>	<p>3.0 CM points total, 1.0 CM point given per year</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I. Member Certificate or card including dates of membership and Certification number <i>or</i></li> <li>II. Proof of renewal/fee payment for covered years</li> </ul>
<b>Teaching</b>		
<p>Teaching laser safety courses or laser safety in a course external from your organization, i.e., not a part of your primary job responsibilities. See <a href="#">Certification Maintenance Points (CM Points) Breakdown</a>.</p>	<p>3.0 CM points total</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I. Letter from supervisor stating teaching not part of job requirements/duties (where applicable) <i>and</i> one of the following:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Course agenda showing course date and time schedule <i>or</i></li> <li>B. Completed CM point request form with course description <i>or</i></li> <li>C. Course approval letter with CM Reference number</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

Category	Category Maximum	Required Documents
<b>Active Participation in a Laser Safety Standards or Regulations Committee</b>		
<p>Active participation in laser safety standards or regulations committees external of your organization, i.e., at the regional, state, national or international level. For example, a CLSO/CMLSO could earn 1.0 CM point per year for being an active member of ANSI ASC Z136 or one of its subcommittees.</p>	<p>3.0 CM points total</p>	<p>I. Letter/email from committee chair, vice-chair, secretary, or secretariat confirming membership and dates active</p>
<b>Attendance at Professional Meetings and Conferences</b>		
<p>Attendance at laser safety or application related professional conferences or meetings. CM points are determined based on length of laser safety and laser application sessions attended. For example, a CLSO/CMLSO could earn 1.0 CM point for each day of attendance at the International Laser Safety Conference (ILSC®). See <a href="#">Certification Maintenance Points (CM Points) Breakdown</a>.</p>	<p>4.0 CM points total</p>	<p>Laser Conference</p> <p>I. Conference Registration/ Certificate of Attendance</p> <p>Non-Laser Conference</p> <p>I. Conference Registration/ Certificate of Attendance <i>and</i></p> <p>II. Signed Conference Verification Form (if not BLS pre-approved event)</p>

Category	Category Maximum	Required Documents
<p><b>Presentation or Poster Papers</b></p> <p>Presentations or poster papers at laser safety professional conferences or meetings, e.g., ILSC, AIHce or LSO Workshop. Paper presentations ≤ 20 minutes will be awarded .5 CM point. Platform/technical presentations (peer reviewed selection process) at a national or international conference which are &gt; 20 minutes but &lt; 60 minutes will receive 1.0 CM point.</p>	<p>2.0 CM points total</p>	<p>I. Conference Registration <i>and</i></p> <p>A. Conference agenda showing you are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. a poster/paper presenter</li> <li><i>or</i></li> <li>2. a plenary/session speaker (NOT a poster or paper presenter)</li> </ol> <p><i>or</i></p> <p>B. Proceeding showing you are a poster/paper presenter</p>
<p><b>Other Activities</b></p> <p>Points may be claimed for laser-related activities, such as professional certifications (e.g., CIH = ½ CM point), or reviewing laser safety or laser application related journal articles. Please complete the Journal Article Verification Worksheet <sup>5</sup>. Article titles and access information will be delivered via the BLS News &amp; Review e-newsletter and/or the BLS website.</p>	<p>2.0 CM points total</p>	<p>I. Journal Article Verification Worksheet signed by supervisor</p> <p>II. Letter from BLS crediting you for:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Exam questions</li> <li>B. Proctoring exam</li> <li>C. Completing other BLS volunteer work</li> </ol> <p>For Professional Certifications</p> <p>I. Professional Certification certificate with dates</p> <p><i>or</i></p> <p>II. Receipt for payment of renewal dues for approved certification</p>

A current list of sample conferences ancillary to laser safety and a list of laser-related professional/technical organizations and societies may be obtained by contacting the BLS or visiting [www.lasersafety.org](http://www.lasersafety.org).

5. The Journal Article Verification Worksheet may be downloaded from [www.lasersafety.org](http://www.lasersafety.org).



## Dual Certification

If an individual has achieved both the CLSO and CMLSO designations, each designation must be renewed at the end of its 3-year CM cycle regardless of the other designation cycle date. The number of CM points and renewal fee (along with extension year fee, if applicable) required for recertification of a designation remains consistent.

CM points obtained for a specific activity cannot be used for both certifications. Similar activities within the same category could be used, one per designation (e.g. conference, membership see below for example). A CM worksheet should be completed for each certification and submitted to the BLS. If you have any questions regarding Dual Certification, please feel free to contact BLS.

### Dual Certification Example

Designation	Activity	Total CM Points
<b>CLSO</b>	Job Experience	3 (1 per year)
	LIA Member	3 (1 per year)
	ILSC 2011	4 (1 per day of conference)
<b>CMLSO</b>	ILSC 2013	4 (1 per day of conference)
	AORN Member	3 (1 per year)
	ASC Z136 Participation	3 (1 per year)

## Pre-Approval of Activities for CM Points (Applying for CM Points)

Organizations or individuals may apply for CM points. If an organization believes it offers products and services that are beneficial to the continuing education of CLSOs, it may submit its offerings to the BLS for consideration. If an individual attends a training course or participates in an activity that is currently not approved for CM points, he/she may submit information to the BLS for consideration of points toward Certification Maintenance. It is preferable this information be submitted to the BLS at the time of the activity for documentation purposes.

If/when an activity is approved by the BLS for CM points, it will be assigned a unique BLS approval code and the number of CM points assigned. The requestor will also receive a formal letter of approval via e-mail.

### Applying for CM Points

To apply for CM points, a CM Point Request Form must be submitted along with a description, agenda/course outline, and CV of any speaker or instructor of the course or activity to assist the BLS in its evaluation. The CM Point Request Form may be downloaded from [www.lasersafety.org](http://www.lasersafety.org) or obtained by contacting the BLS. Completed forms should be sent directly to the BLS with all supporting documentation for consideration. Approval of CM points is an approximate one-month process. Only

activities that contribute to continuing education in the area of laser applications and/or laser safety will be considered.

## Alternative Recertification Methods

A CLSO/CMLSO who is unable to achieve the 10 CM points required over the 3-year cycle and wishes to maintain his/her certification may choose from the options below.

### Retake the Certification Exam

The exam must be taken and passed prior to the end of the 3-year cycle, i.e., before the December 31st expiration date. The payment for the exam is due prior to retaking the exam; however, the application process and \$50.00 fee will be waived. Only individuals that have not participated on a BLS Review Board or proctored an exam during the 3-year cycle are eligible. The ability to take the exam in lieu of submitting points for renewal is available only in year three of the individual's CM cycle.

If the individual does not pass the exam, he/she is no longer certified. If the individual wishes to become certified again, he/she must reapply (submit application, application fee, and references), take and pass the exam, i.e., start over as new.

### Assessment Methods

Exam dates, locations and delivery method (paper and pencil, web, computer, etc.) are administrative decisions and at the discretion of the BLS staff. There will be a minimum of two (2) paper and pencil exam dates per year, in the spring and fall (unless [Emergency Procedures](#) in BLS Policies and Procedures enacted). Other exam dates throughout the year may be added at the discretion of the BLS staff. Computer based testing availability is subject to local testing center accessibility.

### Accommodations

Computer Based [Testing Accommodations \(ADA and non-ADA\)](#) can be requested through our third-party testing partner, Prov. Pencil and paper exam accommodations can be requested by contacting BLS. Pencil and paper testing accommodation requests must adhere to [Application Deadlines](#).

### Application Deadlines

All applications for the certification examination must be postmarked/emailed no later than four weeks prior to the pencil and paper exam date. There are no deadlines to submit applications for computer based exams.

### Request an Extension Year

The extension year allows CLSO/CMLSOs one (1) additional year to earn CM points. The point maximums for each category will remain the same. Only new points in categories not fulfilled will be applied towards the 10 CM points needed. If a CLSO/CMLSO meets the requirements to maintain

their certification, their new cycle will begin January 1st following the extension year. The following limitations apply:

- The request and payment for both the renewal fee and extension year fee must be submitted no later than December 31st of the original 3-year cycle, i.e., the original certification expiration date
- An extension year may only be requested once every other certification cycle after initial approval
- A CLSO/CMLSO can only renew by CM points in their extension year
- There is no “grace period” allotted to the fourth year

The CM worksheet and any other supplemental documentation must be completed and submitted by December 31<sup>st</sup> of the extension year. If there are any questions concerning the CM form, the BLS will contact the CLSO/CMLSO for clarification. The CLSO/CMLSO will not have the usual sixty (60) days to resolve the situation. If the situation is not resolved by December 31st of the extension year, the CLSO/CMLSO will go to [Inactive Status](#).

## Extension Year Eligibility Example

To illustrate the new policy, we can consider this example. Mr. Laser is a CLSO and his certification cycle ends December 31 of this year. He realizes he does not have the required 10 CM points and due to a number of factors cannot earn the points by the end of his cycle. He chooses to apply for an Extension Year and submits his application prior to December 31. Since he did not use an extension year last year, he is approved. When he receives notification from BLS that he is approved for an Extension Year, he may begin earning CM points to reach the 10 CM points required for renewal. Mr. Laser already earned the maximum number of points for his job (3 CM) and for attending conferences (4 CM), so he must earn 3 CM points in the remaining categories. He chooses to apply for a one-year membership at a BLS-approved organization for 1 CM point and then chooses to read laser-related journal articles for 2 CM points. At the end of the Extension Year, Mr. Laser has the 10 CM points needed for renewal and submits his CM worksheet and documentation to BLS by the December 31 deadline. He will not be eligible to apply for another Extension year during the following certification cycle, as the Extension Year may only be used every other cycle. His next cycle will be a three-year cycle.

# Change in CLSO/CMLSO Status

## Active Status

Active CLSO/CMLSOs maintain certification every three (3) years by earning at least 10 CM points, and by paying the recertification fee. Notices will be sent out via e-mail only as a reminder to recertify. It is the sole responsibility of the CLSO/CMLSO to provide the BLS with current contact information including telephone number and e-mail address. All CM forms must be postmarked/e-mailed by January 31st after the 3rd year. Failure to submit the recertification documentation and fee will result in [Inactive Status](#).

## Inactive Status

“Inactive Status” means a CLSO/CMLSO may no longer use the rights and privileges outlined by the BLS in this document until he/she has obtained “Active Status” again. During the grace period (January 1st through January 31st after the 3rd year), an inactive CLSO/CMLSO may become active again by submitting applicable CM forms along with the \$150.00 recertification fee. After that time, it will be necessary to retake the exam to become active again, which includes reapplying, resubmission of reference letters, in addition to payment of the application fee and examination fee.

## Resignation

A CLSO/CMLSO may resign at any time. A written (or e-mail) resignation must be submitted to the BLS. Once resigned, an individual may not use the designations “Certified Laser Safety Officer,” “Certified Medical Laser Safety Officer,” “CMLSO,” or “CLSO.”

If a CLSO/CMLSO who is the subject of a complaint voluntarily surrenders his or her BLS certification at any time during the pendency of a complaint under these [Administrative Procedures](#), the complaint is dismissed without any further action by the BLS Commission, the BLS or an Appeal Board established after an appeal. The entire record is sealed and the individual may not reapply for certification by the BLS. However, the BLS may communicate the fact and date of resignation, and the fact and general nature of the complaint that was pending at the time of the resignation, to or at the request of a government entity engaged in the administration of law. Similarly, in the event of such resignation, the CLSO/CMLSO’s employer and the person or entity who submitted the complaint are notified of the fact and date of resignation and that BLS has dismissed the complaint as a result.

# Fees

*Fees are non-refundable except where stated. Acceptable forms of payment are MasterCard, Visa, American Express, Discover and check. All fees must be paid in U.S. dollars; checks must be drawn on a U.S. bank.*

## Recertification Fee

A recertification fee of \$150.00, accompanied by a completed Certification Maintenance (CM) worksheet, with supporting documentation as necessary, is due triennially (every third year). Recertification fees should be postmarked no later than January 31<sup>st</sup> after the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of the CM cycle. Failure to submit the CM worksheet and recertification fee will result in [Inactive Status](#), as discussed in more detail in the [Change in CLSO/CMLSO Status](#) section.

## Extension Year Fee

A recertification fee, accompanied by an extension year fee of \$50.00 and completed request form must be submitted/postmarked no later than December 31<sup>st</sup> of the third year of the CM cycle. Failure to submit the request form, recertification fee, and extension year fee by December 31<sup>st</sup> of the third year will result in [Inactive Status](#). A CLSO/CMLSO who turns in his/her request form after the December 31<sup>st</sup> deadline will be declined and lose certification. The extension year adds one (1) additional year to the certification cycle. An additional recertification fee will **not** need to be submitted at the end of the fourth (4<sup>th</sup>) year of the certification cycle.

# Rights and Privileges

## Certified Laser Safety Officer (CLSO)/ Certified Medical Laser Safety Officer (CMLSO)

A person who is certified by the Board of Laser Safety will receive an individually numbered certificate. That person may then use the designations “Certified Laser Safety Officer,” “Certified Medical Laser Safety Officer,” “CMLSO,” or “CLSO” in accordance with BLS policies, so long as he/she is in good standing with the BLS.

A person who is not certified, who has let his/her certification expire, or is not in good dues standing may not use the designations “Certified Laser Safety Officer,” “Certified Medical Laser Safety Officer,” “CMLSO,” or “CLSO.”

# BLS Code of Professional Conduct

This code provides principles of professional conduct for Laser Safety Officers certified by the BLS. As a requirement of being certified, such persons act professionally, safely and in accordance with this code.

CLSO/CMLSOs shall:

1. Practice the profession using their knowledge and skill for the enhancement of safety and health of people whose lives and well-being may depend on their professional judgment.
2. Strive to increase or improve their self-development, competence, professional knowledge and skills in the area of laser safety.
3. Perform services and assignments only in the areas of their competence.
4. Act in the best interests of public health and safety.
5. Avoid conflicts of interest.
6. Be honest and impartial and act responsibly to uphold the integrity of the profession while serving the public, employees, employers and clients with fidelity.
7. Counsel the public, employees, employers and clients regarding potential health and safety risks to avoid unsafe practices and injury.
8. Obey all federal and state laws applicable to the profession.



The mission of the BLS is to provide a means for improvement in the practice of laser safety by providing opportunities for the education, assessment, and recognition of laser safety professionals.

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